THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS COMMERCE

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1872.

WHAT HE FOUND.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Now, mother, tell me why it is you are so anxious to have me find Mrs. Morris, when I reach New York?"

"I have intended to do so, Stanley, but have delayed as long as possible referring to the saddest days of my life. To-morrow you leave me, and I wish to have you feel the deep debt of gratitude we owe the woman who was our only friend when we were in sore need, strangers in a strange land. You know, my son, of your father's dying when you were scarcely two years old. He left us a year previous, in our English home, and sought employment in New York. He was very successful, and ten months after, he wrote me full of hope and bright anticipation. He bade me come to him, and inclosed money for our passage and the necessary outfit for our journey. How happy I was with thoughts of our reunion! I was an orphan. My home was with a relative, who, though always kind, could not hide from me the fact that we were an additional burden. So, of course, I was doubly anxious to get to your father. On the vessel, coming over, was Mrs. Morris. She was in deep grief; returning, a widow, to the home she had left a happy wife, scarcely two years before. Her husband had long been an invalid. His physicians advised a sea voyage, speaking confidently of the favorable result. But it proved of very little, if any, benefit. He died in London, a few weeks previous to my meeting her.

"On our arrival in New York, we learned before leaving the vessel that the cholera was making fearful progress there. After looking anxiously for your father's coming in vain, Mrs. Morris proposed I should share the carriage waiting, with friends, for her, and go to my husband's boarding-house, the address of which I had. A terrible dread filled my heart. He must be ill, I felt sure, or he would have met us. We reached our destination. Resisting Mrs. Morris' efforts to detain me while the driver went to inquire, I sprang from the carriage, rang the door bell, and asked for Mr. Newton. I distinctly remember the look of deep sympathy from the Irish girl who answered the bell, and quickly ran back, to return with the lady of the house. She drew me into the sitting-room, and strove to break gently the terrible tidings. I heard her tell that your father had fallen a victim to the dreadful scourge. They had buried him only the day before. Nothing more I knew until, several hours after, I woke to consciousness in Mrs. Morris' home. Tenderly she cared for you during my sickness which followed the fearful shock, gently soothing me all the time with promises of her continual friendship. The little money left after defraying your father's expenses was insufficient to take us back to England, and if otherwise, I should have hesitated to return again to burden my uncle.

"'You must stay with me. Share my home as a sister as long as you choose, or until your little man here provides for you a better one,' said this kind friend that God had raised up for me in my great trouble.

"She was holding you in her arms then, caressing you. She continued to cheer me with her kind, loving assurances.

"I remained with her several months, until I grew well and strong. Then I insisted that she should help me to obtain some employment. I could not consent longer to remain dependent. It was imposing on her hospitality. I felt my services were but small remuneration for all she gave me.

"Yielding to my entreaties, she obtained for me the position of nursery governess for Mr. Manners' children. With them I remained during the day, returning to you at night. How lovingly she cared for you in my absence! As faithfully as if her own, through the many diseases of childhood, she nursed you.

"When I had been thus daily separated from you for eighteen months, my patrons proposed I should bring you, and remain with them all the time. Dear, good Mrs. Morris really grieved to part with you. She had no children, and I believe would gladly have kept you always. We lived very happily in our new home for nearly five years. There, of course, it was I met Dr. Manners, who came from his western home to visit his brother. When he returned, you and I went with him. You know that through his loving care you have never felt the loss of your father. Until the last five years, I corresponded regularly with my friend. What can have prevented my hearing from her during this long time I cannot tell, unless the letter I wrote, telling her of my removal from Iowa to this State never reached her, and she may have written there to me. Sometimes I fear she may be dead, or in very destitute circumstances. Her means were very limited when we were with her. Quite likely, in the great goodness of her heart, she has continued her charities until she has impoverished herself. Now, my boy, you know why I am so anxious you should find her, and in every possible way seek to prove our gratitude."

"Indeed, mother, I will. But surely God will not let so noble a woman suffer. I will find her if she is living, and she shall have a son who, if she needs, will make a home for her. Mother, my heart is filled now with love for her who was my other mother.”

“That’s right, my son. I would have you feel so,” said Mrs. Manners. “Now here come your sisters to tell their wishes. You will have enough to keep you very busy. Take out your tablets, to make note of what you could never remember otherwise, I’m sure.”

“All right, mother. But your wish is marked on the tablets of my heart,” Stanley Newton answered.

A few days after, he arrived in New York. Presenting his letter of introduction, he was cordially received by several of the most respectable and influential families of the city. But Stanley had little time for social intercourse. He immediately began his studies in the office of a celebrated lawyer. Every hour that he could spare from duty he devoted to the earnest determination of finding his mother’s friend.

Through the liberality of his step-father, Dr. Manners, Stanley had sufficient money to permit his indulging in amusements, but he would not. Every dollar was reserved for the one sacred purpose—to relieve Mrs. Morris, if he found her in poverty.

One evening he yielded to the earnest entreaty of a young friend to accept an invitation to the opera.

“I will take no excuse; you must go. You have made such a recluse of yourself. But I am determined to draw you out to-night. I have secured a fine position for you to command a view not only of the stage, but also of the audience. I want you to see our beautiful girls," said his friend.

Never was there a more brilliant assemblage. It was one of Rossini's best operas, which should certainly have enchained Stanley's entire attention; but to his friend's perfect amazement, in answer to his admiring exclamation, "Beautiful! exquisite! sublime!" Stanley replied:

"Indeed she is. Who is she? Is that her father attending her?"

His eyes were fixed on a private box close by.

"Who are you talking about, man?" asked his friend, in a low tone.

"Why, I thought you were speaking of that young lady in the opposite box. Excuse me, Frank; I had really forgotten all about the performance," said Stanley.

"Well, I declare! You are a nice fellow to bring to hear an opera. Don't look there so much. I'll tell you all about them, when we get out."

Stanley tried very hard to keep his eyes on the stage, but they would wander to the most beautiful girl he had ever seen—one so different from the many there. All others were so much dressed; feathers, flowers, jewels and ribbons everywhere, except with that lovely girl, whose head was adorned only by its own wealth of bright brown hair, which was drawn back from her fair face, and fell in a heavy cluster, wavy and curling, to her waist.

Stanley could not keep his eyes away from the beautiful girl until he felt sure his constant gazing had attracted the notice of another young lady who was seated next to her. Stanley saw her speak, and then, looking toward him, seemed to be directing the attention of her companion. But instead of turning toward him, the lovely girl drew further back in the shade, and Stanley allowed his eyes to wander no longer. He felt that she was displeased, and perhaps considered him very rude.

"Oh, if she only knew how impossible it was for me to keep my eyes away, she would pity me," he thought.

"It was a clear case of love at first sight," his friend declared, when they were on their way home, and Stanley asked:

"Who is she? Do tell me, Frank!"

"She is one of the greatest heiresses of our city—Miss De Crespigney. Ah, I see, Stanley. You have gone the way of all the rest. Well, try your luck. You are as fine looking a fellow as I know, and can easily obtain an introduction. You may be the fortunate one."

"Do you mean to say none of her numerous admirers have found favor with her? That she is not engaged?"

"Yes, I mean not engaged, nor likely to be, it seems. She treats all alike kindly, gently dismissing them as lovers, yet retaining their friendship. She has passed two seasons thus."

"And that grand looking old gentleman with her, who is he?" asked Stanley.

"Her father—a courteous, genial man. You need not fear him," answered Frank.

Stanley returned home, to sleep and dream of the beautiful girl. Indeed she was constantly in his thoughts, and he deeply, hopelessly in love.

A few days after, when sitting in the park, he heard the clattering of approaching horses' hoofs. Looking up, he beheld, dashing wildly forward, a terrified animal, bearing a beautiful girl, whom Stanley immediately recognized as Miss De Crespigney. Springing forward, he caught the reins, and succeeded in arresting its mad course; and lifting from the saddle the almost senseless girl, bore her to a seat. Immediately after, her father rode up, his face blanched with terror.

Stanley, seeing his alarm, said quickly:

"Your daughter is unharmed, sir."

"Thank this gentleman, papa," the beautiful girl said.

The old gentleman caught Stanley's hand, saying:

"I scarcely know how to express my gratitude, sir. But for your timely aid, I might have been childless."

What Stanley replied, he never remembered himself. But it made a very favorable impression on Mr. De Crespigney, for on parting with him he gave him his card, and urged a speedy call.

A sweet, grateful smile Eva gave him, which might have filled Stanley's heart with great hope; but he would not accept it so. Such happiness was not for him. He could not seek her love, even if it were possible he might win it.

When relating the incident of the afternoon to his friend, Frank exclaimed:

"Why, old fellow, you are in luck. Fate or fortune, whichever you may call it, has given you a great lift. Accept Mr. De Crespigney's invitation; and I'll be willing to wager all my earthly goods you will ask me to stand groom's-man before I am very many years or months older. Go ahead, Stanley!"

"I dare not—I cannot. Although never aspiring to such joy as you speak of, still it would be great pleasure to know that lovely girl; but even that I cannot grant myself."

"Why not? What is to prevent?" asked Frank.

"Duty—a sacred duty I have to perform. If I went to visit Miss De Crespigney, I should have to dress more, and in many little elegances of the toilet, spend money which I have devoted to another object. I will tell you."

And Stanley proceeded to tell in few words his mother's story. At the conclusion of which, Frank exclaimed:

"Well, we *must* find Mrs. Morris; I'll help you. And now to work. What have you done?"

Stanley told of his continual inquiries, and endeavors to find some clue from the old residents in the neighborhood.

"Oh, nonsense, boy! I'll have her before the week is out."

Sitting down to the desk he wrote:

"If Mrs. Alba Morris, who came from England in the steamer *Magnolia*, July, 1851, will call at No. 55 —— street, she will hear something to her advantage."

"There, if living, this will bring her," he said, handing the paper to Stanley.

"I wonder I never thought of this. We will go now to the newspaper office," said Stanley.

Three days after, the friends were seated in the office when a lady entered.

They had just been talking of Mrs. Morris. And when Stanley's eyes rested on the face of the sweet, motherly looking woman, he hastened forward, and said eagerly:

"*You* are Mrs. Morris, I am sure. O yes, my heart claims you, my other mother!"

"Yes, yes; and you are my boy, Stanley Newton, the only son I ever knew."

The good woman's eyes filled with tears, as Stanley, clasping her hand in his, drew her to a seat on the sofa, and sank beside her, exclaiming:

"Thank Heaven, I have found you!"

Frank withdrew then, and there followed mutual explanations concerning the long silence between the friends. Letters had miscarried both ways.

"My circumstances have changed very much since then," said Mrs. Morris.

"Yes, mother feared as much. You were ever so very kind. But God is too good to let you be needy long. Now your boy has found you, things will be different. Nothing I can do can repay you for all you gave to us. But all I have, all I gain in the future, is to comfort you."

"My good, noble boy!" Mrs. Morris said, putting her arms round him and pressing her lips to his. "You will come to see me this evening, and we will have a long talk?"

"Yes, indeed I will. And you will speak plainly to me, as to your own son?"

"Yes, Stanley; here is the address. I will look for you," she said, handing him a card, and bidding him good-bye.

Frank soon after returned, and asked quickly:

"Well, is it as you feared?"

"O yes. I am to go to see her to-night. There is her address."

"I thought so, by her very plain attire. But what is this? No. ——, Fifth Avenue! Ah, yes. She is a housekeeper, I suppose," said Frank.

"*That* shall not last long though," Stanley returned.

Frank looked again at the card, and catching it up, held it before Stanley, exclaiming:

"Look at this again. I declare, Stanley, fate has determined to throw you constantly in Miss De Crespigney's way. Your friend is living there. You might as well yield to the good fortune which I am sure is waiting for you, not be fighting against it."

"I am very sorry she is there."

"Well, you need not worry. Be sure if you call *only* to see the *housekeeper*, she will receive you in the housekeeper's room."

"That is well. I shall not presume on Mr. De Crespigney's kindness."

Stanley, choosing an hour when he thought Mrs. Morris' duties would not claim her, presented himself at Mr. De Crespigney's mansion.

Ringing the bell, which was immediately answered by a servant, Stanley inquired for Mrs. Morris. He was about handing his card, when his friend came into the hall, cordially welcoming him. Still holding his hand, she drew him into the magnificent drawing-room, and up to Mr. De Crespigney, saying:

"My husband—" but before she could proceed with the introduction the old gentleman exclaimed:

"Why, bless my heart, this is *my* young friend! I've been waiting and wishing him to call for two days, never dreaming *your* friend, whom you have been talking so much about, was the same fellow. Welcome, welcome, my boy! If you are my wife's boy, you are certainly mine too."

Stanley's surprise may be imagined; and his face flushed with mortification when he remembered his words to her whom he thought was still Mrs. Morris, poor and needy.

Mr. De Crespigney went out to summon his daughter, and Stanley began an apology for his great mistake.

"Dear boy, if you knew how much real joy your kind, loving words gave me, you would not attempt an apology. You have proved your noble nature. But here comes Eva."

Sweetly the beautiful girl greeted him, and never in his life had Stanley spent so happy an evening.

"How now, Stanley? Shall you yield to Fate and your heart's pleadings?" Frank said, after Stanley had told him of the denouement.

"I shall yield to my heart's pleading. What my *fate* may be I fear to think," answered Stanley.

A few months after, Stanley sought her who always called him "son," and, opening his heart for her knowledge and guidance, said:

"I love her! I love her! What shall I do?

I have struggled against it. Dare I hope? Oh, speak and direct me!"

"Take hope, my son. Go to her father. He is noble, kind and just. You need have no fears," said his friend.

"Eva, sweet Eva, your father has given me permission to tell you, what you surely must have long since divined, how deeply and truly I love you. May I say all my heart is eager to tell?"

A beautiful, encouraging smile bade him speak that which the lovely girl was happy to know.

The next morning Frank exclaimed, as Stanley entered the office:

"What has come over you, man? You look as if you had just arrived from the land of perfect bliss."

"Or have just entered there," answered Stanley. "Frank, your prediction has come true. Thank Heaven, Eva De Crespigney will be mine!"

And so ended all Stanley's plans of sacrifice, the intention of which had secured for him such a blessed reward.